ITD
Information Technology Department

INFORMATION LINK

Fly your IVR Application with ITD — Pilot Project Needed!
Terese Birnbaum

ITD is in search of an agency to take part in a pilot IVR project, developed completely by ITD staff. Ellen Bauer, from ITD's Software Development staff, has been trained on IVR development.

Contact Terese Birnbaum (328-3266) or Ellen Bauer (328-3595) to discuss the possibility of ITD developing your IVR application or in brainstorming IVR ideas.

North Dakota Ranks 7th in E-Government

A major study of e-government at the state and federal level ranked North Dakota as number seven among the 50 states. The study was sponsored by the Taubman Center for Public Policy at Brown University.

As part of this study, 1,813 state and federal government websites were evaluated on dimensions such as service delivery, citizen responsiveness, security, privacy, foreign language translation capabilities, and disability access.

A copy of the full report is available on the Web at www.InsidePolitics.org

Big Savings for State Agencies Using IVR Technology!
Terese Birnbaum

The following state agencies have saved money and improved their operations by implementing Interactive Voice Response (IVR) applications.

DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES - CHILD SUPPORT
1. Custodial application
    Implemented - 6/29/1999
    July 1999 (First Month) - processed 11,777 calls
    August 2000 - processed 25,558 calls / 229 hours of use

2. Non-Custodial application
    Implemented - 10/21/1999
    November 1999 (First Month) - processed 658 calls
    August 2000 - processed 1467 calls / 16 hours of use

What does the IVR system do for the Child Support Enforcement Division?
History: The conversion of the clerk of court records with the Child Support Enforcement Division records was implemented in November 1998. Federal law mandated that all receipts and disbursements for child support were to be centralized within one state system. From the period of time between October 1998 and July 1999, conversion took place within the state child support office. Over 42,000 records were converted to the state child support system. Prior to the mandate, the state office handled approximately 8,000 cases.

With the conversion of the records, custodial parents, non-custodial parents, employers, and several statewide and nationwide agencies started calling the Child Support Enforcement Division inquiring on cases.

Prior to the installation of the IVR system, the staff of the State Disbursement Unit (SDU) answered all telephone calls as they were received. The agency staff was not prepared for the massive volume of calls and the telephone system also encountered some problems. The agency did a survey over a period of time to determine the nature of the majority of questions being asked. From that list, they determined the priority of each call and outlined the most frequently asked questions in order to determine what items to automate. Child Support contacted ITD, research was completed, testing was completed, and an auto attendant and IVR system was developed and put into place in the SDU in June 1999.

Who are the primary users of the system?
The custodial parents or the recipients who are to receive the money. However, non-custodial parents have commented that they use the IVR system on a regular basis as well.

What are the cost savings to the State Child Support Agency?
If an automated IVR system was not installed, two additional full-time staff would have been required to handle the telephone traffic.

What are the hours of availability?
The IVR system runs 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. The highest volume of calls is

between 10 AM and 2 PM. By using information from the IVR reports, Child Support was able to identify peak hours when they needed to open additional lines to offer their customers efficient service. The system is available through the weekend hours which has proven to be a very useful tool, as it would not have been cost efficient for the agency to staff the office during the weekend hours.

How is the IVR system working for the users?
The system is working very well for the Child Support Division. The only complaints they have received were from customers when the system was down, which has been minimal. The agency has received several compliments from customers who are very pleased with the system.

What has been your experience with the technical assistance to the application?
Child Support's comment: *"Our agency has always received excellent service from the technical group managing the IVR system. On the occasion or two when the IVR has been down, the technicians responded in a very professional and expedited manner to our call."*

What number to call?
1-800-231-4255 or 701-328-5440

DEPARTMENT OF TOURISM
Implemented - 1992
Converted - 12/29/1999
July 2000 - processed 3,125 calls

What does the IVR system do for the Department of Tourism?
The State Tourism Department's IVR system allows the general public to call in for any assistance when planning a vacation. This system is available 24 hours a day and 7 days a week. One of the options of the system allows callers to request a travel packet of information. The system records the individual's name and address where to send the information. The next business day the staff at the Tourism Department transcribes that information and mails out the packet of travel information.

Another option of this system will give callers information on outdoor activities, such as the condition of skiing and snowmobiling trails, as well as information on canoeing and fall foliage.

During business hours, the system allows callers to be transferred to speak directly to a travel counselor.

What are the cost savings to the Department of Tourism?
The system has shortened the time Tourism employees spend on the phone, allowing them to work on other items. The system allows the callers to shorten their call by not having to wait for a travel counselor. The system also allows callers to phone in their information requests after normal business hours.

What number to call?
1-800-HELLO ND or 1-800-435-5663

ND GAME AND FISH DEPARTMENT
Implemented - 8/14/00
First Month - processed 12,000 calls

What does the system do?
Get HIP! Registration which is required to hunt migratory game birds in North Dakota!

If you plan to hunt ducks, geese, doves, snipe, swans, sandhill cranes, or woodcock in North Dakota, you need to register for the Harvest Information Program (HIP).

Game and Fish Department's IVR system allows hunters to obtain a HIP registration number by answering some survey questions. Hunters who have previously registered with HIP do not have to answer the survey questions again, but are given their HIP registration number. Any hunters not found on the database will be transferred out to a call center to complete the HIP registration.

What are the cost savings to the Game and Fish Department?
Before the IVR system was developed, a call center was contracted to take all the calls. This IVR system is estimated to process about 40,000 calls by October 1. The Game and Fish Department is estimating a total savings of 50 percent or more by using the IVR system.

<u>What are the hours of the system?</u>
This system is available 24 hours a day and 7 days a week. So, if you're out in the field and have a cell phone, you can register to hunt.

<u>What number to call?</u>
888-634-4798

If your agency would like to discuss the possibilities of using IVR to save money, contact Terese Birnbaum at 328-3266 or tbirnbau@state.nd.us for a free consultation.

ITD   EMPLOYEE   PROFILE

Name: Roxy Ennen
Job Title: Telecommunications Specialist
Section of ITD: Telecommunication Services Division
Job Responsibilities: Program software changes on multiple Nortel Meridian Telephone Systems, Meridian Mail and Voice Services Applications (auto attendants). Process customer service requests for moves, adds and changes (MAC) of telecommunications equipment. Schedule and process voice communication traffic reports on the long distance network (SDN) and Nortel Meridian Telephone Systems. Receive voice station and network trouble reports for resolution. Provide information to caller inquiries and respond to requests for telephone user training.
Years at ITD: Started at ITD in July of 1987, but have been employed with the State of North Dakota for 17 years.

ITD's New IT Coordinators/Contacts Database & Work Request System Now Available Via the Web!
Cindy Kemmet

The new system has been designed to give lead IT coordinators in each agency the ability to manage the assignment of key contact roles for their agency personnel. Lead IT coordinators can designate other IT coordinators for their department/agency and set individual security rights for each IT coordinator. Dependent on the security rights that have been setup for them by the lead IT coordinators, IT coordinators in that agency will then be able to access a variety of work request forms.

On September 1, an e-mail message was sent to all lead IT coordinators ITD has on file, outlining how to access the system and who has access.

If you are a lead IT coordinator for your department/agency, or if you are a county auditor and have a signed agreement on file with ITD, and did not receive the e-mail indicated above with a Word document attached, please contact me at 701-328-3003 or ckemmet@state.nd.us for the information.

Eventually, ITD will remove the link to the old work request forms. So, please start using the new system as soon as possible. If you have any questions, please call me at 701-328-3003.

Privacy Act Requirements for Requesting Social Security Numbers on State Forms
Becky Lingle

More citizens are concerned over the potential risk for fraud when asked to provide their social security numbers.

In response to the information learned at the recent Business Forms Management Association Symposium, ITD Records Management requested and received an opinion from the Office of the Attorney General confirming the need to comply with the Privacy Act.
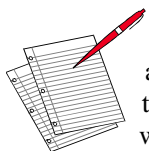
Section 7(b) of the Privacy Act [5 U.S.C. Section 552a (e) (3) (A-D)] requires that any federal, state or local government agency which requests an individual to disclose his social security account number shall inform that individual whether that disclosure is mandatory or voluntary, by what statutory or other authority such number is solicited, and what uses will be made of it.

State agencies that solicit social security numbers on forms must include a Privacy Act statement on the form which identifies how the social security number will be used, whether the request for the social security number is mandatory or voluntary, and under what statute or authority the social security number is requested. As forms supplies are depleted or design changes are made, please include a Privacy Act statement on your agency's forms.

If you have any questions regarding the statement required on State of North Dakota forms requesting social security numbers, please contact me at 701-328-3585.

For text of the full Privacy Act of 1974, see http://www4.law.cornell.edu/uscode/5/552a.html

Criminal Justice Integration Strategic Plan
Nancy Walz

A number of planning activities currently underway by the Judicial Branch and the Attorney General's Office have underscored the need for an integrated system for collecting and reporting criminal justice information. In addition, an integration plan is becoming an essential component of requests for grant funding. To this end, a project to develop a strategic plan for integrating criminal justice systems in North Dakota has been initiated. ITD is seeking external resources in the form of grant funding and technical assistance to complete the planning activities.

ITD, with the cooperation of the Judicial Branch and Bureau of Criminal Investigation, has applied for planning assistance to SEARCH. SEARCH, the National Consortium for Justice Information and Statistics, is a non-profit membership organization created by and for the states.   It is dedicated to improving the criminal justice system through the effective application of information and identification technology. A task force representing state and local entities involved in criminal justice has been formed to develop the plan. Larry Webster from SEARCH will be facilitating the initial meeting of the task force in early October to acquaint members with the purpose of the task force and the need for integrating criminal justice systems. Background information on the status of current integration efforts will also be presented by agencies. Mr. Webster will be conducting interviews with key groups as part of the assessment phase of the process.

ITD has also applied for a $25,000 planning grant from the National Governors' Association (NGA). The activities required for the NGA grant will be integrated with the assistance provided by SEARCH. The grant was initially due on August 18. Grant activities include attending a regional meeting to share information about lessons learned in integration efforts in other states.

It is anticipated that the strategic plan will be completed by March 2001. Contact me at 701-328-1991 for more information.

PowerBuilder Version 7.0.2
Vern Welder

ITD has tested the latest release of PowerBuilder. Version 7.0.2 should be ready for production use in the October 2000 timeframe. We expect Sybase to discontinue support of the current release by May 2001.

We are requesting that customers with PowerBuilder applications submit work requests to have us convert them to the latest version. The typical application takes about 12 hours to convert which includes the actual conversion and a systems test. This time will vary with the size and complexity of the system. After testing, we ask that agencies do an acceptance test to verify that the application is working properly.   All applications are expected to convert correctly, but we prefer to play it safe by testing. We would like to have all conversions completed by the end of 2000.

New Office Location
Vern Welder

Software Development Services has outgrown the space in the Capitol's Judicial Wing. To alleviate crowded conditions and allow for additional expansion, we have moved some employees into the former Budget Video location in Northbrook Mall. Brenda Haugen's team has moved from a smaller office within Northbrook Mall to the new location. Greg Grube's team was temporarily located in the Legislative Wing of the capitol building and has moved to the new location as well. Customers affected by these moves have been notified.

Electronic Post Cards
Vern Welder

Check out the 'Snapshots and Postcards' link on the discovernd.com web link. This link allows you to place one of the North Dakota snapshots on an electronic, e-mail postcard. Give this site a try and promote North Dakota when you communicate with friends and relatives.

Maximizing Laptop Battery Life
Dean Glatt

The Basics

If you rely on your laptop PC for your job, you know how important it is to make sure your battery is functioning properly. The following is an overview and some tips for keeping your portables powered up.

How can you maximize the life of your portable battery? Here is some general information and care tips for the most common portable batteries that will help you do just that.

Before you can maximize the life of your portable battery, you need to determine what type you are using. When it comes to portable batteries, there are only a few choices. The three dominant types of rechargeable batteries in use today are Nickel Cadmium (NiCd), Nickel Metal Hydride (NiMH), and Lithium Ion (LiIon). Here is a brief description of each.

⇨ **Nickel Cadmium (NiCd)** is the most prevalent and rugged type of rechargeable battery on the market. NiCd batteries perform better in extreme temperatures and can endure approximately 750 charge and discharge cycles. However they are prone to "memory effect" (discussed later) when they are not completely discharged each cycle.

⇨ **Nickel Metal Hydride (NiMH)** is a step up from NiCd batteries. It offers up to 40 percent additional capacity compared to a NiCd battery of equal size. NiMH batteries are not as subject to memory effect degradation. These batteries generally have a life expectancy of approximately 400 charge/discharge cycles.

⇨ **Lithium Ion (LiIon)** is the newest technology in portable power. LiIon will deliver roughly twice the run time of a comparable NiMH battery. LiIon batteries are more expensive, however, and are available for a very limited number of devices. A charger designed specifically for LiIon batteries must be used to charge them. LiIon technology also has a life span of about 400 charge/discharge cycles and is completely immune to memory effect.

What is memory effect?

NiCd batteries, and to some extent, NiMH batteries, suffer from what is called "memory effect." Memory effect occurs when a battery is only partially discharged before being recharged. The battery "forgets" that it has the capacity to further discharge all the way down. For example, if on a regular basis, you fully charge your battery and then use only 50 percent of this capacity before the next recharge, eventually the battery will become unaware of its extra 50 percent capacity, which has remained unused. The battery will remain functional, but only at 50 percent of its original capacity.

 The way to avoid memory effect is to fully charge and then fully discharge the battery at least once every three to four weeks. Letting your laptop run on the battery until it ceases to function can do this.

Charging the Battery

When charging the battery for the first time, the device may indicate that charging is complete after just 10 or 15 minutes. This is normal with rechargeable batteries. New batteries are hard for the device to charge because they have never been fully charged and are not "broken in." Sometimes the device's charger will stop charging a new battery before it is fully charged. If this happens, remove the battery from the device and then reinsert it. The charge cycle should begin again. This may happen several times during the first battery charge. This is normal. Batteries that have been in storage or out of use for long periods of time should be reinitialized before being put back into service.

Conserving Battery Power

Here are some tips on conserving laptop battery power:
⇨ Optimize the power management features provided on your system. Managing the power used by the hard drive will save signifi-

cant amounts of power and will extend your usage time.

⇨ Decrease screen brightness. On color systems, you can save quite a bit of power by changing to black-and-white (monochrome) mode.

⇨ Turn off the modem, if possible, and remove any PCMCIA cards not in use.

More Pointers

Be sure to clean dirty battery contacts with a cotton swab and alcohol. This helps maintain a good connection between the battery and the portable. Also, if you don't plan on using the battery for a month or more, store it in a clean, dry, cool place away from heat and metal objects. NiCd, NiMH, and LiIon batteries will self-discharge during storage. Remember to recharge the batteries before use.

Time for Replacement

After a certain number of charging cycles, your battery will no longer charge fully and will not give you its initial performance. This is due to normal wear and tear, and unfortunately, you can do nothing about it. You do have a couple of options at this point. You can dispose of your battery and buy a new one, or you can have the worn-out battery refurbished.

If you dispose of your battery, please dispose of it properly. These batteries should not be thrown in the trash. They should be taken to a recycling facility.

Refurbishing is an economical alternative to buying a new battery. Most battery packs can be rebuilt to like-new condition to provide you with more years of continued service.

Before Disaster Strikes
Sharon Freeman

When we think of a disaster and what happens to our records, we have a tendency to think of our business records. But, what about our home records? Disasters such as fires, tornadoes, or floods can occur at any time and it's important to have home records in order. It's also important to do the planning *before* the disaster strikes.

The National Endowment for Financial Education (NEFE), the American Red Cross, and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) have developed some simple, common-sense steps to take now in preparation for a disaster.

1. **Conduct a household inventory.** This is a list of everything you own.
   - Record the location of original important financial and family documents. This includes documents such as birth and marriage certificates, wills, deeds, tax returns, insurance policies, etc.
   - Make a visual or written record of your possessions. Each room should be inventoried by describing each item, when it was purchased, and how much it cost. This can be accomplished by using a camera, a video camera, or notebook paper.
     - Include the model and serial numbers.
     - Include items in the attic, garage, and basement.
     - Photograph the exterior of your home, including the landscaping, cars, boats, and recreational vehicles.
2. **Buy Insurance.** Consider special coverage. Renters' and homeowners' insurance won't cover certain types of losses. Ask your insurance agent about coverage for floods, home offices, big-ticket items, etc.
3. **Use an Evacuation Box.** This can be any type of durable box. Store the box in your home in an easily accessible area. The evacuation box should include:
   - Small amount of traveler's checks or cash.
   - Negatives for irreplaceable personal photographs, protected in plastic sleeves.
   - List of telephone numbers of emergency contacts.
   - Health and dental information; copies of prescriptions for medicine and eyeglasses; and copies of children's immunization records.
   - Copies of auto, flood, and homeowners' insurance.
   - Backups of computerized financial records.
   - List of the location of other important records, such as deeds, titles, wills, etc., if they are not stored in a safe deposit box.
   - List of bank account, loan, credit card, driver's license, and social security numbers.
   - Safe deposit box key.
4. **Rent a safe deposit box.** Safe deposit boxes are invaluable for protecting original important papers, including the following:
   - Deeds, titles, and other ownership records for home, autos, RV, boats, etc.
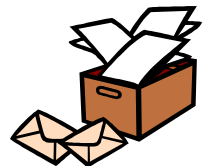
- Birth certificates.
- Marriage license/divorce papers and child custody papers.
- Passports and military/veteran papers.
- Appraisals for expensive jewelry and heirlooms.
- Certificates for stocks, bonds, and other investments.
- Trust agreements, living wills, and powers of attorney.
- Insurance policies.
- Home improvement records.
- Household inventory documentation.

You may not be able to do everything that is listed; but do as much as you can. Taking this action before a disaster strikes will be a great assistance to you if a disaster should occur to your home.

Project Management Certification
Nancy Walz

Congratulations to the following state employees who were awarded state project management certification at a ceremony in Memorial Hall of the Capitol Building on June 23: Judy Kadrmas, DHS; Heather Liberda, DOT; Jeff Day, DOT; Diane Gunsch, DOT; Mark Molesworth, DOCR; Phil Miller, ITD; Korrine Lang, JSND; Jennifer Kunz, DHS; and Dennis Klipfel, ITD. They completed a one semester course provided by Mayville State University and successfully passed the certification exam from Project Management Institute (PMI).

The purpose of the certification program is to build the ability of state agencies to deliver successful technology projects. Students learn to manage projects using a disciplined, controlled, and consistent approach, resulting in the delivery of quality products, on time, and within budget. This fall, 23 students are enrolled in the certification program. *The Project Management Body of Knowledge* (PMBOK), created by PMI, serves as the foundation for the training. Students learn project management terminology, the phases and major processes of projects, and how to write and execute project plans covering integration management, scope management, time management, cost management, quality management, human resource management, communication management, risk management, and procurement management.

For additional information about the program, contact the instructor, Bernell Hirning, at hirning@mail.masu.nodak.edu.

ITD Executive Management

Curtis Wolfe, *Chief Information Officer*
Mike Ressler, *Director of Operations*
Nancy Walz, *Associate Director of IT Planning*
Dan Sipes, *Associate Director of Administrative Services*
Vern Welder, *Associate Director of Software Development Services*
Dean Glatt, *Associate Director of Computer Services*
Jerry Fossum, *Associate Director of Telecommunication Services*